Contact: Sgt. Chris Benavides Date: 12-23-09 Release No. 09-191

NEWS RELEASE

SAPD Officer Involved Shooting

A preliminary investigation pertaining to an officer involved shooting reveals the following:

This evening, south patrol officers were dispatched to investigate a robbery of an individual. The suspects committed this robbery in the suspect vehicle while armed with a rife/shotgun. A description of the suspect vehicle was broadcasted to all officers city wide. At approximately 09:20 pm, officers assigned to the Tactical Response Unit (TRU) observed the suspect vehicle traveling north on IH 10. The vehicle was occupied with five males and had been identified as being a stolen vehicle. Officers immediately called for cover officers and the SAPD helicopter for support. Officers maintained sight of the suspect vehicle awaiting the arrival of the police helicopter. As the helicopter arrived, the suspect vehicle accelerated in an obvious attempt to elude officers. The suspects traveled west on Culebra Rd. and subsequently stopped in the 1600 block of Waverly. All five suspects exited the suspect vehicle and fled on foot in the 1600 block of Waverly. Officers caught up to one of the suspects in the 1700 block of Waverly. This suspect began to reach into his waistband as he repeatedly yelled that he had a gun and that he was going to kill the officers. Fearing for their safety, the two pursuing officers were forced to fire their duty weapons (once each) at the suspect. The suspect was struck by the gunfire and was transported to a local hospital where he was pronounced dead. The four remaining suspects were apprehended at the scene. The weapon used by the suspects during the robbery was recovered in the suspect vehicle. Suspects will be charged with Aggravated Robbery of an individual, Evading Arrest on foot, and the driver will be charged with Evading Arrest in a vehicle.

The shooting team is currently investigating the incident. As per department protocol, Officer Randy Alvarez, a 3 year 10 month veteran of the department, and Officer Bart Vasquez, a 6 year 9 month veteran of the department, will be placed on administrative duty.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE